

Socrates, the Greek Teacher



Lev Tolstoy

Part I. Socrates wants to know how people should live, and hears the voice of his soul

Socrates was born in Athens, Greece. The father of Socrates was a worker, a mason, and his mother was a midwife. Socrates often used to say that his mother was a grandma helping people to give birth, and so he does, only he helps to give birth not to people and but to thoughts. The father of Socrates taught him craftsmanship, and sent him to school to learn literacy and sciences. In Athens, everybody was literate and they had plenty of different schools. There were schools for the poorest, where children were studying in the yard and draw letters with chopsticks on the sand. There were richer school where they studied the literacy, plotting, numeracy and recited poems. And there were the highest schools where students were taught to everything that the Greeks knew at that time. From birth, Socrates was clever and eager to learn and his father sent him in the highest school. And at school, Socrates learned all the sciences and read the essays of all the best Greek writers. Socrates has learned sciences and returned to his father and continued to work using his craft, masonry. Socrates worked well, but often pondered during his work. Socrates thought about that he went through all sciences and learned all things people taught, and yet he didn't discover something that he and other people needed to know. "Need," – Socrates thought, - "to reach an understanding of how a man should live. And we learn a lot, but there's no use for us from our study. Even if we discover all the stars and if we count all the stones in the sea, and teach this everyone, our life wouldn't become better from it. All of us, people, are hustling, looking for good, but in fact – we're producing evil for ourselves instead of good. And none of us knows what the real blessing is for a human. For example, I studied, studied, but ask me how a person should live, - and I don't even know. And this is the only one thing a man needs to know. The only use of my knowledge is that I learned that all our teachings are hollow. Before my study, I thought that I knew something, but now I know for certain that I do not know anything. And the only use of my knowledge is that I know now that I don't know anything. They taught me about gods, that they have created people and reward people living according to their will and execute them if people don't do what the gods

require. But what the gods want from us and how they tell us to live?" And Socrates began recalling everything they taught him about the gods.

Greeks believed in many gods. One of them, the god of the sky, was considered the highest, another one was considered the god of the seas; the third one – the god of winds; the fourth - the god of the sun; the fifth - the god of wars; the sixth – the god of amusement; the seventh - the god of death. There were goddesses, too: the goddess of wisdom, the goddess of enmity, the goddess of farming, the goddess of handcraft, and many other goddesses. It was written about the gods that they live in the sky, just like people on earth, and getting married, and have sex, and argue, and cheat, and fight. They taught about the highest god Zeus that he was mighty and dreadful; he gave luck in everything to those who was pleasing him, and sent the lightning and killed those who he was angry at. And that's how Zeus was portrayed in the stony temple, as a big healthy old man with a lightning in his hand. And Zeus started his reign in heaven after he threw his own father to hell. Socrates remembered this, and remembered what they taught him about Zeus, how he quarreled with his wife and lied to her, how he was drunk from a heavenly drink and how other gods and even people cheated him. And Socrates realized that even if there was such Zeus, then Zeus didn't not know how we should live, and there was nothing to take from him. The second in importance after Zeus was the goddess Athena - in her honor the city was named. There was such a big doll carved in stone and placed on the main square. There was a big helmet on her head, and a gold spear in her hand. They taught about this goddess that she gave people wisdom. And Socrates began to recall everything that was taught about her. And also, after reviewing the case, he saw that there was nothing to learn from this goddess, either. According to the legends, Athena was sly and cruel, helped her favorites and harmed others without remorse. And they taught that once Athena learned that a Greek girl spins wool and weaves not worse than her, she got angry at the girl, and turned her into a spider, and made her spin wool for a century. They also taught about the other gods doing the same bad deeds. The gods were called gods, but their deeds were human, and often bad. And Socrates thought: "No! These gods are not real, and you can't learn from them how a person should live. These gods are as weak as we, the people, are; they do not act based on truth themselves, so we can't learn from them

how to discern good from evil. But the real God must be righteous and teach a person how to live". And Socrates began to seek such God. Socrates suffered for more than a year or two, and his thoughts didn't let him rest for days and nights. After some time, that what he was looking for came to Socrates. He recognized the God he was searching for and whom the Greeks did not know. And he found God not somewhere, but in his own conscience. When Socrates was looking for the righteous God, that what was happening to him, not just once or twice but daily and nightly, was that when Socrates contemplates and wants to act in one or another way, suddenly he hears a voice in his mind. If this is a good deed, the voice says: "Do it, Socrates"; and if it's bad, a voice says: "Don't do it, Socrates." And Socrates got used to listening to that voice. And the voice spoke to Socrates more and more. And everything it told Socrates was true. And Socrates thought: "If what the voice tells me is righteous, who is telling me this? Not myself, but someone else - who is that? This voice always tells the truth. It teaches me how to live righteously, and because of that I know that this voice is of God". And Socrates began to call this voice God. And the voice opened to Socrates that what he wanted to know - how people need to live. And when Socrates understood the God, he saw that every person can know this God and, like him, can learn from this God how they need to live. And Socrates told to himself, "This is a great deal; and as I found the truth and goodness, I need to teach this to others, so that they will be happy, too." When Socrates reached this understanding, his father has already died, and he himself was married and had children. When he told his wife what the voice of God revealed to him, she didn't believe him. When he told her that he will tell this to all and will teach everyone this, she started to dissuade him from it. "Don't do this," she said. "You'll lose your business, and if start teaching people - will only get into trouble, and it'll be bad for me and for children. Leave these ideas of yours, there're enough teachers without you." But Socrates didn't listen to his wife. He saw that people around him are in distress and suffer from not knowing how to live, and that if he knows that, he can't conceal it in himself. That's what the voice of God was telling him.

In the most ancient times, before Socrates, the Greeks lived well. The Earth they had was warm and fertile. All of them worked themselves: plowed, sowed, planted gardens, kept bees and cattle. There weren't the rich and the

poor, masters and slaves, but they all lived in equality. But later the Greeks began to fight, began to offend their neighbors. At wars, they captured goods, and gold, and silver, and all sorts of things, and cattle, and people were taken prisoners and held in slavery. The Greeks grew rich from war, and their lives started to deteriorate. Who was braver, went into the military. The smarter ones got into office, management. The sneaky ones got engaged in commerce. And the Greeks left dirty work behind, and none of them worked. In Athens' land during the times of Socrates, there were more slaves than masters: a hundred thousand masters and three hundred fifty thousand slaves. All work was done by slaves, so that the Greeks-aristocrats considered it shameful to engage in any manual labor. All their business was about how, through trade, or war, or through management, to make more money and to buy for themselves strong and skilled slaves and slavesses and to live in enjoyment. And that's how the Greeks lived and completely spoiled themselves, and none of them questioned how to live truthfully, to help a brother, to feel sorry for a slave and serve another, but everybody thought only about how to bend the other one and to ride him. And Socrates saw that people got lost and were destroying themselves, and he went to the main square and told them what his voice told him, - that their life is bad and that they should live not like that.

Part II. How need to live?

On the square, Socrates met a young man, rich aristocrat, named Ariston. Ariston was not stupid and not a malicious man, but lived like all rich Greeks – didn't do any work, and lived only for his own pleasure. Socrates met him once and started talking with him. People came over and began to listen. And Socrates says: "Hello, Ariston! How come I didn't see you for long time? You must be busy with some work, and didn't have time loafing around, like us? - No, - he said, - I am not busy with any work. And why would I work? There's no work and no reason. I'm good without it. As you know, I'm not some poor man but wealthy, thanks to gods! What is the necessity to work or rush around? If they'd choose me into some management, I would go, out of honor. I'm not sure even about that. To carry any duty is still a trouble. Whether want it or don't - have to go, listen, talk, and write. All this is an excessive annoyance. And why would I confine myself? I have the money, slaves, and everything I'll wish, I'll get. My life is fun, what else do I need? – That's true that you don't have any bondage, - Socrates said, - but will it be good if you'd live that way your whole life? - And what's wrong with that? What's better than to live the whole life in pleasures? – Yes, would that be good? - Socrates said. - Not all good that seems to be good. Have you heard of Hercules? - Who does not know about Hercules, what an athlete he was and how much he's done and what fame he earned, - Ariston said. - Well, and have you heard how he has chosen the path of life? - Socrates asked. – I didn't hear about that. – If you didn't hear, so I'll tell you, - said Socrates. – Should I tell you? - Tell, Socrates, - said others. And Socrates told: - You see: when Hercules grew up, he thought about what kind of life he should choose. So he went for a walk and thought to himself: what should I do and how to live? And so he walked, walked, and came in a far field and sees: from nowhere, in the open field, two women are coming toward him. Hercules was surprised and went toward them himself. And he sees: one of them is not big nor small, neither fat nor thin, neither well-dressed nor untidy, but simple and inconspicuous, goes in a steady pace, quietly, not rushing. And another one is tall, chubby, in a lush dress, with a white-and-rouge powdered face. The inconspicuous woman was not looking around. The well-dressed woman

quivered, dolled herself up and looked back all the time, watched her shadow. When they approached the Hercules, the well-dressed jumped up and ran forward to him. - I know, - she said, - that you are wondering about your life: what kind of life to choose, and by which road to go? So I came out to show you the best way, which is mine. Come with me, and everything will be easy and fun for you. You will have no work, no worries, no sorrows. You won't know any sadness, and fun on my road will never stop, - from one pleasure you'll be moving to another, and the only care you'll have will be to choose: what sweet dish is sweeter, what wine is tastier, what kind of bed is softer and what fun is funnier. And the only work you'll have to do will be to order what'll come into your head. Everything you'll order, others will do. Hercules thought that the promise of the chubby women was attractive, and to remember her, he asked her name. - My name is Present Happiness, - the woman said. - Only the haters, out of anger, call me Luxury. That's how they tease me. But my name is Happiness.

The inconspicuous woman stood quietly when the well-dressed woman spoke; but when the first one finished, the inconspicuous also began talking and said: - First of all, I will tell you my name; they call me Righteousness, and I don't have any other names. I won't lure you with attractions like another woman, but I'll tell you straight what the blessing is for every human being. You will see that only with me you'll find that blessing. Because, as you know, in order for land to produce a harvest, you have to work on it; if you want to have beef, you have to look after the cattle; to build a good house, need to move stones; for people to respect you, need to work for their sake; for gods to love you, need to do their will. And their will is so that you, with your works, pay off the works of others. I will lead you by this road, and only there, on this road, is the blessing.

The Inconspicuous woman didn't finish talking when the well-dressed one jumped in. - You see, - she said, - Hercules, what a hard way she wants to sway you to. Works, works, and only works she promises to you. Will you have a pleasure, or not? wouldn't it be better to go with me? With me, there won't be any work, and it'll be all sweetness from the beginning. You will sweetly eat, tasty drink, softly sleep. Come with me, - said the well-dressed woman and wanted to take Hercules by his hand. - Whoa, - the inconspicuous

said. – You're saying: to sweetly eat and drink; and you think that it's good, but you don't even know how to do that. Because you eat and drink not when it's time, not when you're thirsty or hungry, but when you're bored. And the rarest dishes and expensive wines don't make you happy. You promised that he'll sleep sweetly, but you even don't know how to sleep; to fall asleep, you put soft duvets, pillows under yourself, but even on them you are not unable to fall asleep, because you go to sleep out of boredom. One falls asleep well only after work, and you have nothing to rest from. I know you, and I know those unfortunate ones you've ruined by your temptations of idle and sweet life. Don't you have enough of those who cry over their recklessly wasted young years with you? Because of that, all honest people push you away and call you Luxury and Debauchery. I have not deceived anyone of those who followed me. All those who went after me from their youth, they all got stronger in body and soul, they all have found on my way more happiness than sorrow, and gained respect and love of others, and all of them happily remember their working lives and are peacefully waiting for death. Others grumble at you, but nobody ever scolded me for cheating, and everybody honors me and calls me one name - Righteousness. That is the kind of life I call you for, Hercules!

Hercules didn't hesitate any longer and went after the Righteousness. He followed Righteousness in his life, worked for people, and pleased both people and gods, and found his blessing.

Socrates finished and told Ariston: - And so you, Ariston, think, who of these two you should go with –with Luxury or with Righteousness. Decide, while there's still time, so that when you're old you won't feel sorry about your foolishness and won't die after pleasing neither yourself, nor people, nor God.

Part III. How to manage people?

Once Socrates heard that a rich man, called Glaucon, seeks to be a ruler. Socrates knew him, knew that he was an inexperienced and careless man, and Socrates wanted to expose him. Socrates met him once on the city square. Glaucon stood in the midst of the people, and the people respectfully talked with him. Everyone was waiting for him to become the ruler, so that then everyone would benefit from him. Glaucon waited for his election, and was full of pride in front of people. Socrates approached. - Hello, Glaucon! He said. - I heard that you're going to become our ruler. - Yes, I hope so, - replied Glaucon. - Well, that's good. When you get this position, you'll have a lot in your power: you can do a lot of good for people. And your glory will go far. - Yes, why not? - Glaucon said. - Why wouldn't I become a good ruler? - A good ruler, - Socrates said, - and good fame comes after that who has done a lot of good for his people. Isn't it? - Of course, - replied Glaucon. - So please do not hide anything, tell us: what good are you planning to do to the nation, and what are you going to begin from? Glaucon hesitated and responded not immediately. He has not figured out where to start. While he was thinking, Socrates said: - How come you ponder, isn't it easy to see what does the nation good. Because the nation is the same humans, like we all. If you wished to do good for your friend, wouldn't you first of all tried to grow his wealth? - Of course, - Glaucon replied. - Well, after all it is the same with the nation, - said Socrates. - To do good for the nation - means to make all richer. Isn't it? - How can't it be true, - said Glaucon. - Well, and how to make the entire nation richer? - Socrates asked. - I think that a nation should have more income and less expenses. Shouldn't it? - Yes, I think, - answered Glaucon. - Tell me, Glaucon, where the national income coming from and how much is it now? You must've known all of this. - No, I do not know, - said Glaucon, - I hadn't thought about that yet. - Well, you haven't thought about this, - said Socrates, but you surely thought how much expenditure is necessary for the needs. And if current costs are excessive, you've surely figured out how to reduce them. - No, - said Glaucon - I can't answer this, either. I haven't thought about it as well. - You haven't not thought of it yet, either. - Socrates repeated. - Well, you'll catch up with this. You must've

thought about how you would enrich the nation? What have you thought about this? With what, do you think, you can make the nation wealthier? – I think the best way to make the nation richer, - Glaucon said, - is war. Conquer other peoples and take everything from them and share the wealth. - That's right, - said Socrates, - this would be the shortest way to make people rich, only there are cases when one not only do not conquer foreign people, but also waste people and money for war in vain, and then the nation will become not richer, but poorer. – That's true, - Glaucon said, - but you need to start war only when you know for sure that you'll win, and not you'll be won over. - Meaning to go to war, you have to know the real power of your people and the power of your enemy? - Socrates said. - Of course, you need to know that. - said Glaucon. - So tell me, Glaucon, how much military forces do we have ready for war and what forces the enemy has with whom you want to fight? - I can't say that for certain, - said Glaucon, - one can't remember this by memory. - So you must have records, fetch them, please, we'll read, count, - Socrates said. - No, I don't have notes, - Glaucon said, - and the enemy troops cannot be counted. – What a pity, - said Socrates, because if you can't count the enemy, you cannot know upfront whether we will win or will be won over, so this means that your way to enrich the people is not very reliable. Will you enrich them or not - is unknown; you will likely ruin many people, and instead of making them wealthy you'll make them poor. So we will leave it, and tell us about one more, - said Socrates. - Tell us, Glaucon, how much bread is need to feed the entire nation? What harvest did we have this year, and will we all have enough bread before the new harvest? You must've considered this? - No, I haven't inquired of it yet. - Glaucon answered. Glaucon shut up and everybody went silent. Then Glaucon said: - You are so scrupulous, Socrates, and if it takes so much efforts to think about everything, and count as you ask, then it'd be too difficult to govern the people. - And you thought – it's easy? - Socrates said. – I'll ask you the last question: I've heard you started helping your uncle with housekeeping and then quit. Why did that happen? - It was difficult for me, - replied Glaucon, - and the property was big, and uncle didn't listen to me. - You see, you couldn't manage with a house, but going to rule the entire nation. Anyone can start any business, yet it'll become a success only for that one who understands it. Make sure you don't get into trouble instead of glory and honor. First of all, go learn everything about that what I asked you about, and

only then think about the ruling. Glaucon silently departed from Socrates and quit seeking the position of the ruler.

Part IV. Who Is Better - Slave or Master?

Once it happened that his neighbor Aristarchus came to Socrates and began complaining about his trouble. – Can't get my head around what to do. I was rich, - he said, - traded, then my commerce didn't work out - bankrupted. And then the war made matters worse, my relatives were killed, had to take their widows and orphans to my house. And I have now gathered fourteen souls in my home. How am I going to feed them all! Trouble to trouble, and I don't know what to do. – I feel sorry for you, my friend, - said Socrates. - How do you think to help it? – Wanted to borrow money to start commerce again, but nobody lends because they know that things are bad. Socrates shook his head and said: - It is what it is, need to feed the fourteen souls, need to supply; but your neighbor has more than twenty souls, and all of them are fed. They even make money, - said Socrates. – What you've compared! - Aristarchus said. – My neighbor is alone, and he has nineteen souls of slaves; slaves will produce more than will eat. But I have fourteen souls of free Greeks. – And how do free Greeks differ from slaves? Aren't they better than slaves? - Certainly better, these are - free Greeks, and those are the slaves. - In words it sounds like the free are better, - said Socrates, - but in reality it's not like that; you're saying it's all well with your neighbor because he has slaves, and it's bad with you because you've got not slaves but free Greeks. It looks like the slaves are able to work and the free are not. - And mine could work if somebody would make them, - said Aristarchus, - but I can't make them work! After all, they are from a noble family and relatives to me, how can I make them work? They'll get offended, will start accusations, discontent, I can't let that happen.

Well, and how about now, do you not have accusations, discontent? - Socrates asked. – Do you all live in agreement? - What agreement! - answered Aristarchus. – I hear only reproaches and quarrels. – So, that's what it is, - Socrates said, - even without work, you don't have an agreement and have nothing to eat. Because the nobility of your relatives doesn't feed them and doesn't give consent. So why don't you do this: why not give them work they can bear? Wouldn't it be better if they started to work? - I would arrange

that, - said Aristarchus, - but they will not like that. And people in the city will probably blame me. - And do they not blame you now? - Socrates asked. - Even now, there are kind people who blame me for the poverty; blame, but don't lend me money to get better. - Exactly! - Socrates said. - You can't listen to all the gossips; but try, get them to work, maybe things will get better. And Aristarchus did as Socrates are told. In half a year, Socrates met Aristarchus again and asked how he lives. And Aristarchus says: - I live well and thank you all the time. I listened to you that time and now my business has recovered. One man lend me some wool, my family spun this wool, woven cloth, then sewed male and female dresses for sale. Sold – and not only returned the money for the wool, but also made profit. Since then, this became our business, and we are all fed, and have no quarrels, and have enough money. - And what are people saying? - Socrates asked. - Oh, and people do not blame, - answered Aristarchus and laughed.

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Once Socrates saw a young aristocrat lying on the city square and fanning from the heat. - What are you so exhausted from? - Socrates asked him. - How not to be exhausted, I went from the village ten miles on foot. – Well, and why are you so exhausted? Did you carry anything heavy? - The young man got offended. - Why would I carry? I have a slave for that; he carried that what was with me. - And what about him, is he exhausted or not? – What can happen to him! He is healthy, walked all the way, sung songs even with that burden. – I'm sorry for you, - said Socrates, it appears that your slave can serve you and himself, and you can serve neither other people, nor even yourself.

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Another time Socrates saw one owner beat his slave with a whip. - For what are you hitting him so painfully? - Socrates asked. – How not to beat him, - answered the owner, - he's a glutton, a bummer, and only thinks of sleeping, to having fun, and eating sweeter. For him, even a hundred lashes is too little! - Socrates called the slave owner aside and said: - Well, and what do you dream of, rather than to sleep softer, to eat sweeter, and to have fun? - The

slave owner did not answer. – And if you think of that yourself, how many lashes should you receive for the same for what you punish the slave? Isn't that you whose example he follows? The owner got offended and walked away from Socrates.

Part V. How to live in a family

When Socrates began breaking away from his stone work, in order to go to the city square to teach people, his wife got upset, thought they'll lose a lot; but when many people started to gather around Socrates, she got relieved and thought, "People pay well for teachings, teachers live in prosperity; and that's how we'll live". But Socrates didn't think that way. He thought: "I can't take payment for my teaching - I teach what the voice of God tells, teach righteousness. How can I take money for it?" And although a lot of people gathered to listen to Socrates, he did not take money from anybody. And to support his family, he earned some with his craftsmanship: only suffice for the necessities. The wife of Socrates considered this life poor and difficult and embarrassing. She often grumbled about her husband not taking money for his teaching. Sometimes she went to tears and accusations and scolding. The wife of Socrates – her name was Xanthippe - was a woman with a fiery temper. When angry, she ranted and thrown all that came at hand. The children were objects of her temper but most of all – Socrates himself. But he did not get angry and either kept silence, or persuaded her. Once she scolded, scolded, but Socrates stayed silent; and she got annoyed by that and, out of anger, poured a bucket of slops over him. - Well, that's what it is, - said Socrates, - First it thundered, and then it rained after the thunder. And he began to wipe himself out. That's how Socrates acted and taught his sons to do the same.

One day his eldest son was rude to his mother. And Socrates said: - What do you think, - he says to his son, - about those people who do not remember kindness? Are these good people? - If people do not want to return good for those who did them good - I think, they are the crappiest people, and everyone thinks that. – Fair enough, - said Socrates. – Now, tell me if one person carries another, when that one has no strength, from place to place, feeds, dresses, puts to sleep, awakes, takes care of him when he is sick, gets illness from him, endures his anger with love. What, did such person do any good? – Did a lot of good, - son said. - So, this is the same, and even more than that your mother did for you. She carried, and fed, and didn't sleep

nights, and did not know whether she would get anything from you - thanks or help. And what do you pay back to her, do you honor her as a grateful man should? Son got embarrassed but did not want to submit and started excuses: - I would honor her if she was different, but this one shouts, offends me for nothing. So I couldn't endure. – What about you, when you were little, did you always scream for a reason? But she tolerated that, and loved you, and cared for you. That's exactly what you need to do, also, - said Socrates.

Part VI. Why Socrates needed neither expensive food nor rich clothes

One time a teacher came to Socrates, looked at his life and said: - So, now I saw your life, Socrates; you eat very coarse food, wear the simplest clothes and without changes, the same in summer and winter; and you don't even have shoes at all. What your wisdom is for if your life is difficult? - Have you heard me complaining? - Socrates asked. - No, I haven't heard; you do not complain. Yet, your life is unpleasant. You don't have tasty food and drinks, and you don't know fun. - No, - said Socrates, - nobody eats or drinks with such pleasure. And do you want to know why? I'll tell you now. You yourself know that the simplest food tastes better than the most expensive, when you're hungry; so, that's what I'm doing, I don't eat until I'm hungry, don't drink until I'm thirsty, so why would I need the expensive food and drinks for? To me, the simple is tastier than the expensive. And in regards to clothes I'll tell you that I don't need any other. You know, people have two outfits, one for the winter, another for the summer because in the summer they're hot in the winter clothes, but in the winter - cold in the summer clothes. Well, I acclimated my body in a way, - said Socrates, - that I don't get hot in summer, nor cold in winter. And, in the heat or in the cold, I go where I should be. So why should I get other clothing? - Let's assume you trained yourself that way, - the teacher said, - but why other people would live how you live? Socrates said to him: - Hear me why. Let's say a person in need comes to me and to you and says: help me. Who of us is more eager to help him - you or me? You'll think: I'd be glad to help, yet I need a lot for myself. I'd give to him - but I'll be in need. I would help him with his work - but feel sorry for my time, you'd think: during this time I'd earn so much for myself. But for me - it's all different. I am always willing to help another, because I need little for myself. And I don't regret my time because I don't take money for it: I teach for free. - This is true, - said the teacher. - Or, here's another example, - said Socrates, - assume a difficult time came for the nation, need to serve the society. You think: I hope they won't choose me because then I'll lose in my business. But nothing holds me, I'll gladly go to serve. - The truth is yours, - said the teacher, - and yet I would have rather

agree to die than to live like you. Wonder that you find so many people wishing to listen to you. – Yes, many listen to me, but just few implement, - Socrates said. – Some listen-listen, and go back to the same life. And yet, there are those who stay and live as I advise, and just like I do, they don't complain and tell that they became happier than before. We know your happiness, because we came from it to ours, but you don't know ours because you have not experienced it.

And teacher went back from Socrates and reasoned with himself: "What should I think about Socrates now? Many consider him a half-witted oddball, condemn him, laugh at him, but it seems to me now that he's a good, fair man."

Part VII. About the brotherly life

Once Socrates learned that one rich merchant separated from his brother. He met the merchant and began telling him: I wonder about you, - he says, - you are a smart man, economical, try to earn more, hire clerks, look for partners in your business, but separated from your brother. Is it too bad to live with a brother in harmony? – It's good to live with a brother, - answered the merchant, - only with what kind of brother? My brother is good with others, but I didn't see anything good from him to myself. – But maybe you yourself treating him badly? - Socrates asked. - I am capable to speak softly with somebody who is friendly to me, and will do good for that one who is kind to me; but to be kind to someone who, in words and in deeds, tries to cause troubles for me, that I can't and I'm not planning to, - the merchant answered with bitterness. - Tell me, - Socrates said, - how would you deal with a man if you wanted to be friends with him? – How would I deal?, - the merchant said. - As everybody does – I would do him something nice: would invite him to my home, treat with everything I have, would help him in any case, would give him money if he needed it. - So do the same to your brother, and you'll see that he'll change to you. – If I'll be first to bow to him, he, perhaps, will turn away. I'll only feel ashamed in front of people. – It's never shameful to do good, - Socrates said, - and good people won't laugh at it. And even if your brother won't live with you brotherly, then you will know that it's only your brother to blame. But this won't even happen, - said Socrates. - You just do this. I know how friendly your brother can live with people. Start a new brotherly life and be happy, because you'll live as God instructed.

- Two brothers, - said Socrates, are like two eyes, two hands, two legs. Hands are intended by God to support each other, just like a brother to a brother. What would happen if one hand started interfering with another? As you know, hands don't interfere but help each other. That's why they are hands. And thus they benefit from each other. And there's much more benefit from a brother to a brother than from a hand to a hand, an eye to an eye, a foot to a foot: hands and feet can only help each other within close proximity, but a brother helps a brother even when one is on the other side of the world. Both

eyes can see together only in one direction, but a brother is most useful to a brother where he can't see much with his own eyes. God instructed to live brotherly with all people, and who doesn't live with his brother brotherly, he fails to fulfill the God's law.

Part VIII. How people should live together

Among those who came to listen to the teachings of Socrates were not only the residents of Athens, but also people from other cities and even from foreign lands. They came to listen to Socrates either to his home, or waited for him to come to the city square and surrounded him there.

One time many people gathered around Socrates, old and young, their own townfolk and people from the other lands. Socrates did not like to speak lengthy himself, but always asked others. He used to tell that, just like his mother herself did not give birth but only helped others to give birth, so as he doesn't teach others but only helps others to learn themselves. And that's how it was this time. Socrates sat on the bench, and people around him. Socrates put his hands on his knees, lowered his head and thought for a moment. Everybody waited for what he'll ask. Socrates raised his head says:

- Tell me this: why people live together, and not alone? Look, now there is disagreement, animosity between people, but if each person lived by himself, there wouldn't be anybody to conflict with. Perhaps it would be better. And they all began to talk. One said: people live together, he said, because it's more profitable together. It's hard to work alone. You can do more together. Another one said: it'd be scary to live alone, difficult to defend yourself. The third one said: it's boring to live alone, here's more fun with people. The fourth one said: even God has made a man to live not alone, but with people.
- True, Socrates said. - But how is more beneficial to live – in peace or in enmity? - Of course, in peace – they all answered. That's what you think, and God so ordered, and yet it with us it's not like that. Why is this so?

Everybody went quiet and didn't know what to answer. Socrates spoke again:

- I don't even know myself – wonder if we'll get somewhere together. Let me ask you again, and you answer. First of all, tell: from whom a person benefits more, from a slave-hireling, or from a pal-friend? – It's well known, from a pal-friend, - all answered. – A slave-hireling thinks about his own gain, not about the owner's worth, - said one, – but a pal-friend cares of you, as of himself. – A slave-hireling is with you only while you have money, or before it's depleted, but once money is depleted or you have nothing to pay with,

you'll be alone, - said another. – Also, why a pal-friend is dear is because he won't leave you in time of trouble, and will share the last thing with you, - said the third. - With a good friend, you will become better yourself, - said the fourth. - So you are all agree, - said Socrates, - that a pal-friend is a dearer than a slave-hireling; and that person is rich, and powerful, and happy, and delighted, and peaceful – not who has a lot of hirelings, but who has a lot of friends. You must all have more friends than slaves, don't you? - It would be good, but it's not what happens, - said one. - If you ask us, how many enemies each of us has, we can count them right away, - said another, - and we'll count not a small number of slaves and hirelings; but some of will count two, or one, faithful pal-friends, at best. - Why is this so? - Socrates asked. – You say yourself that a pal-friend is the first thing, but you don't make friends. If we know that the bulls are useful for us, we get them a lot. Why don't you make friends, if you know that they give help, and joy, and support in troubles? – That's because, - one said, - there are many good bulls but few good people. When you need a bull to plow, you'll choose the good one and buy; but when you need a friend, where to find the good one? There a lot of people, but not enough good ones. - That's right, - said Socrates, - and which bull in plow do you call good? – That one which plows, and strong, and obedient. – And what kind of person do you call a good friend? - Socrates asked. - That one who thinks not just about himself, but also thinks about the other one, who, once he hears that a friend got sick, will find out whether he needs anything; and if you need help around the house, he'll help, so that your disease won't cause you losses. If you need money – he'll give. That's who I'll call a friend. - Well, but how you'll recognize if this one is that person? – By his good deeds. - And by what he will recognize you? - Socrates asked. - It must be by the same thing. - And when would you become friends, - asked Socrates, - when you're in need or he'll need anything? And everybody went silent and did not know what to answer. - How come you don't know? - Socrates said. – Let's say, a neighbor moved in, and he doesn't know you nor you know him. How do you know whether he'll be a good friend: should you wait for him to help you, or you help him? - I think it is better to wait to see how useful he'll be, - one said. - But he will tell that it's best for him to wait, too. In that case you'll never become friends. – The truth is yours, Socrates, - said the other. – All of us want people to do us good, but we don't want to start, - said the third. – That's why we say that

there are a lot of good bulls but few good people. - And how could they be good, if we ourselves do not want to be good and reproach them for that, - said the fourth. And Socrates said: - We ourselves say that people are better together. And living in friendship is better than in quarrel. You say that the friendship between people is the dear than anything else, and that the friendship means to do people good. But we don't want to do good, but only want others to do good to us. And because of this, we live together not in peace and joy, but in the hostility and griefs.

Part IX. What everyone needs to know?

Once Socrates came back from work and saw that people and many friends gathered in the shade. Socrates approached them, said hello. - We are waiting for you here for some time. – They told him. - Sit down: we need to talk with you. As soon as Socrates sat, people gathered around him from all sides: some people walked by, and stopped by; others were told that Socrates teaches at the wall, and yet others saw themselves and approached. The craftsmen left their work and went to the place where Socrates taught. Four people began asking Socrates, what to teach their children. – Advise us, Socrates, - they say, - what should we teach our sons. We want them to become humans when they grow up. Teach us, how and what to teach them? - And what were you going to teach them? - Socrates asked. – I was going to send my son to learn blacksmith skills, - said one. – And I - stone work, as you, Socrates, did. – And I worked the whole my life on land, and wish my son would work with me, too. - My son is diligent to teachings, he wishes to study medicine. – That's all good, - said Socrates, everyone must work to benefit people, and one person is good at one thing, the other one – in another. Isn't it so? - Socrates asked. - If we have all crafts, will we have everything we need? What else is needed? When we need a house or a temple, we'll go to a mason and carpenter; when need to build new ships, we'll go to carpenters. Well, and when a husband needs to live with his wife, a son with his stingy father, a brother with an angry brother, a neighbor with an evil neighbor, a house owner with a proud guest, a man with a stranger. What master is there to call? – There's no such skill, one needs only to be a just man, - said one. – Anyone will do – a mason, and a carpenter, and a healer, - said another. – Every good person must have be competent in this, - said the third. - And you're right, - said the fourth, - that, in addition to his own skill, everyone must understand how to live with people. - And that's what happens, - said Socrates, - that, in addition to each own skill, there's one more skill everyone must know. - This skill is given for everyone to be understood differently, - one said. - One can, the other can't. – You can't learn this skill as you learn a craft, - another said. – And how can you learn this? – The third one said. - This cannot be learned, - the fourth one said. –

Surprisingly, - said Socrates, - that what matters the most is impossible. At least tell us, what's most important for you – to live well with your wife or to have good shoes? – Oh, I'm ready to walk barefoot all my life, only to always live in agreement with my wife. - Well, and what is worse – to be in a quarrel with your father or not to wear rich dresses? – Oh, it's known that you'd rather refuse from the dresses than to have a quarrel. - And what is the worse disease - fever or when nobody loves you? – Oh, there's no worse disease than the latter. – So it turns out, the matter which everyone needs to know, - dearer than any other matters, dearer than shoe-making, and tailoring, and medicine, all the skills one can learn, - but you can't learn this most dear and most necessary one. Everyone can count all the stars and list all the herbs, but how to live with people, no one can learn. Is it true? – Oh, there must be something wrong, - they answered to Socrates. - And I think so, - answered Socrates.

- People lived before us – didn't they say something about this? I wish it'd be at least an inscription on the temple. What does it say? This was written in the old days. Isn't it about what we discuss, how a person should live with people? - Here it's written: "Know thyself", but it's not about how people should live, - they answered to Socrates. – Or, maybe, it is exactly about that – which says: "Know thyself". Maybe, if we get to know ourselves, then we'll learn how to live. – Explain us, Socrates, - one said.

- You know I don't know how to explain, - Socrates said, - I can only ask, and you will explain it to me yourselves. Let's say, the bulls carry grapes. Now, tell me: who knows the bulls and who knows the grapes? That one who will eat beef and grapes, or the one who knows how to grow bulls and vineyards? - Of course, the one who knows how to grow. - Well, and what is needed to know to grow good cattle and good grapes? – Need to know when to feed, when to dig, and when to tie the grape. - And to do that well, need to know what the cattle needs and what the vineyards requires. Isn't that right? Isn't it the same with ourselves? We know ourselves when we know what we need.

Do we know what we need? - How not to know what we need? We all know this, - one said. - There is no man who does not know what he needs, -

another said. – Now, what do you need? - Socrates asked. - I need a lot, but mostly wealth. If I have wealth, I would have everything. - If you asked me, Socrates, - another said, - I would say not wealth, but the power over people. If I have the power, I'll have the wealth, too. - And for me, - the third said, - neither wealth nor power is needed, I only need to live comfortably and to be engaged with sciences, and so nobody disturbs nor interrupts me from my work. - And I, - the fourth said, - only need to be famous so that everyone would honor me. - What is it? - Socrates said. – If I ask what's needed to have well-fed bulls and good vineyard, all of you will say the same. And when I asked what a person needs, each of you told different. So you can see that we do not know ourselves, because to know oneself is to know that a human needs so that everyone agrees.

You're saying you need wealth, - Socrates said. - Well, we all agree with you. And we will need wealth, too. And how do we share it? Do you agree split it with evenly with everybody? - No, what kind of wealth that'll be? - The first one said. – So we cannot agree with you, - said Socrates. - Will we agree in power? If you need power, so I need it, too. How are we going to dominate one another? - We cannot share it, - another one said and laughed. – So we can't divide it among us, either, - said Socrates. - Now, let's figure out your case, - he turned to the third man, - can we live well your way. You say that you only need to live comfortably and do science, because you love it. But I want to play the flute. I love that. I want to eat, drink when I want to, and to play flute and listen to good musicians but when nobody disturbs me. What if I will live near you? How would I not disturb you? And when you start reciting poems aloud, how would you not disturb me? Well, let's assume, we'll get along, but the problem is, who will feed us? You're not going to cook for me, because you love science, and I'm not going to cook because I love flute. You'd say: we'll make slaves cook for us. But slaves will want to play flute, too, and to count stars. What should we do then? So, your case doesn't suit us, either. What you need, not all people need. And therefore we have not understood a human being yet. Well, and what would you say about mine, Socrates? - The fourth one said. – Right, your word is good, - said Socrates, and the closest to the point. You say that you only need all folks to respect you. That's right, every person needs it. You need me to respect you, and I need the same for myself. And the same is with others.

And how to make people to respect yourself? – Exactly, that is difficult, - said one. - Yes, it's hard, - said Socrates, but that's the whole point. All that you say, everything converges to one: to ensure that people do us good and don't disturb us and let us live as we please. Isn't it? – Yes, that's right. - You said you need wealth, and you said - power, you said - to freely engage in sciences, you said - honors. All you want so that people don't make your life harder, and do you good; and everybody needs the same; therefore, that something that is good for you would not disturb the well-being of others.

We were talking about bulls and grapes. When you say a bull needs to drink, you don't mean he needs to trample the well so that others are left drinking the muddy water, and you don't mean he needs to trample all feed down with his feet so that others are left eating with manure. When you say that the vine needs space and soft ground, you don't mean you need to cut and dig out all the neighboring plants. It is the same with people.

If we know a person and what he needs, then we know what we shouldn't do to him. We shouldn't do to one person anything that hinders or harms the others. Isn't that right? All agreed. – The same way we learn what to do to a person. We all want from others to do us good, but who is doing us good? – People, – they answered to Socrates. – And who are we? – People, also. So what do we need to do? – To do people good. So finally we agreed. - Said Socrates. - We asked ourselves: who are we? And decided that, to understand this, we have to know what we need. We tried the case to find what we need, and we all agreed that we need, first of all: so that people do not disturb our lives, and the second - so that they did us good. And for people to do us good, we must do people good. So this is the beginning of the teaching that every person needs to know. – It is so, - said one man, - yet it's not always possible to see by what deed you hinder another, and what deed will be good and what - evil. – You're right, - said Socrates. - We often make mistakes; and so the students of blacksmith and shoemaker often make mistakes when they learn, but masters teach them to learn themselves and from the masters. So am I myself learning the skills, which everybody needs to know, and teach others what my teachers and the voice of God, which I hear in my soul, taught me.

Everybody hears this voice of conscience in himself, if only he listens to it.

And if you will listen, then you'll learn from teachers and by yourself from it. People are not left without guidance in this most important matter; and ever since the beginning of human race, people learn how to live together; and the same voice is implanted in each person, the voice that teaches everyone the same. It's good to learn every skill, but what's most needed – is to learn how to live, not harming people and doing them good.

Part X. The trial of Socrates

That's how Socrates taught, and he had a lot of friends and devoted disciples, but also a lot of enemies. And how not to have enemies? The teaching of Socrates was too direct and truthful. And all the rich didn't like him. Socrates taught that not the work that is shameful but idleness, and that God sends the true well-being only to working people. And the rich lived in idleness and bragged about their idleness. Socrates taught that the good man does not think about how to live luxuriously, but to live honestly and only reckless people all their lives care about collecting wealth. But the rich only thought of profits, saw human happiness only in luxury and wealth. Enemies of Socrates talked among themselves: "This man Socrates is restless, he only confuses people by his teaching, turns our children against us. They believe him more than us." The angriest of enemies of Socrates decided that they must somehow get rid of him, because he averts people from living carelessly and just enjoying all life benefits. We must fabricate something against him for what we could pull him in court, - debated Socrates's enemies. And they came up with an idea to pull him in court for not believing the gods and corrupting people. And they declared to Socrates, that he is a criminal and they will sue him. Disciples of Socrates felt very upset and bitter because they knew that their teacher did nothing wrong. They gathered around Socrates and began asking him: - Look, teacher, think carefully through what you're going to say to the judges in your defence. One rich disciple said: - If you worry, and can't think well what to say, let us go to one person. For a good pay, he'll write all you have to say in court. You can read it at home, and then tell it to the judges in court, and they'll likely clear you. Socrates said to his disciples: - Calm down, my friends. I will not speak any speeches in my defence. My life will be my defense. And his student Ermogen said to this: - Don't you know, Socrates, how good speeches help in court? Haven't judges cleared the guilty, if he was able to eloquently and cleverly defend himself, and condemned to death the innocent who, defending themselves, could not move judges to pity? - And I, - said Socrates, - will let judges to judge me based on the deeds of my whole life, I have nothing to fear. In my soul, I feel godly suggestion that it's time for me to die. So far I had strengths

to refrain from anything that is evil, to bring benefits to the people, and I'm going into deep old age, decrepitude. I'm afraid to weaken not only in body but also in spirit. Better to die.

They called Socrates in to court. Over 500 judges gathered to judge Socrates. Prosecutors came, and Socrates. Court used to hold cases in Greece on the town square, and a great many people always gathered to listen to the proceedings. The same was this time. Prosecutors held speech and said: - Socrates is guilty that he does not recognize our gods and preaches about the new God. - Judges and citizens! - Socrates said to this. - I lived in Athens sixty-nine years. My life was transparent to everyone: I taught in the squares, by the temples; if anyone has heard from me anything godless or saw that I did something bad, let him speak. All were silent. - To learn the will of the gods, everybody uses sacred numerology here, and I told you, that the will of God we can also know if we listen to the voice of our own soul, because it passes the suggestion of God to us. And nobody said anything on this to Socrates. Now, prosecutors began talking again: - Socrates is also guilty that his teachings is corrupting the youth. - Citizens! - Socrates answered to this. - I taught your children what everyone needs to know. The voice of God taught them what everybody needs to know. I taught them to recognize the voice of God, to discern between prudence and recklessness, truth and false, good and evil. I told to the old and young: don't look for wealth and fame, don't think first about the body, how to please it, but think about the soul. Think about how to benefit others, and put righteous life above all. I have taught what the voice of God inspired me, and for my teaching I am ready to suffer not one but a thousand deaths. Socrates went silent; and prosecutors didn't know what to say. Then Socrates said: - I have nothing more to say in my defense. I know that many tell long speeches hoping to arouse the judges' pity, bring their relatives to court so that their tears and appeals touch the hearts of the judges, but I won't do that. Not because there is nobody to ask for me. I'm also not born from the stone and not from an oak: I also have family, wife, children, and devoted friends. But I won't call them here to ask you for me, because I think it's humiliating for you, judges. You should decide the verdict not out of pity, but out of justice. Conscience obliges you, for that laws are set. And the judges started consulting among themselves.

Enemies started the trial of Socrates, and there were many enemies even among the judges, too, and yet nearly half the judges decided that there was nothing to recognize Socrates guilty for. However, overpowered opponents, and the judges said: - Socrates is guilty. Prosecutors said: - Guilty and deserving of death. Socrates calmly listened to this and told judges: - Prosecutors require my death, but the law gives me the choice of punishment; so hear me out. I could request that instead of death they imprison me for life in jail. But what will this kind of life serve? It will be useless for others, and painful for me. By law I could also choose to be sent to foreign lands. But what would it take for me, an old man, to rove over the stranger lands? The law allows me to pay for myself a large financial penalty. I don't have the money, but my friends and disciples, Plato, Crito and others, are willing to put for me how much is necessary. Do you agree on this, judges-citizens? The judges didn't answer him anything, and then Socrates said: - If I felt guilty, I would be willing to bear the most serious punishment, but my conscience is clean. I did no evil, honestly served my fatherland. For my achievements and works to benefit all, you should have honored me with the highest award that is dedicated for the honored citizens, namely: to contain me through my life at public expense. But you, citizens, instead, called me in court, believed the words of my enemies, have forgotten about my merits. The judges took offense. – How come Socrates decided to reproach us, what should we do? We know that without him, - they began talking among themselves. - And don't listen to him anymore, - the enemies started to inflame, - or do you want to become his disciples, too? - And in fact, it's time to finish the court, - judges have murmured. They spoke briefly among themselves and announced this verdict: - We assign Socrates to death. He has to drink a cup of poison. Socrates listened to the verdict, and, without change in his face, told the judges: - I am sorry not about what will happen to me, but about that you have disgraced yourself and your people for having condemned the innocent. You, citizens, have rushed to get rid of an inconvenient man who was not afraid to speak truth to anyone. You rushed in vain: even without your verdict, the death was already after me, an old man. I ask you one thing: when my children grow up, teach them what I taught you. If you notice they have greed for wealth and fame, reproach them for that as I have reproached you and your children. By doing this, you will do them the greatest good and repay me for what I did for you. And now goodbye, it's

time for us to part ways: you will live, I'm going to die. Who of us will be better off - God is in charge.

Part XI. Socrates in prison

Usually convicts were executed the next day after court, but the trial of Socrates fell on the eve of holidays, when it was considered sinful to carry out death penalty. They put Socrates in jail for all this time. There he spent thirty last days of his life awaiting for his death. Every day his disciples came to prison to visit Socrates, and he continued to teach them, and when he was left alone, he was composing poems. He didn't feel neither sadness, nor fear of death. Holidays were coming to end. His disciples felt poignant to think that soon they will forever lose their dear teacher, - Could we somehow save him? - They talked among each other. And they decided to bribe the prison guard, and get Socrates out of jail at night and secretly move him away into a foreign land. An apprentice Crito volunteered to talk to Socrates about it. Only two days left before the end of the holidays, there was no time to procrastinate. Late at night, students departed and decided that tomorrow morning, as early as possible, Crito will go to persuade Socrates. Crito couldn't sleep. Happy thought, that there is a way to save his beloved teacher from death, didn't let him sleep. As soon as it became brighter, he got up, got dressed and went to prison. The guard knew him, and therefore agreed to let Crito to Socrates right away. Socrates still slept. Crito quietly came and sat by his bedside. Socrates didn't wake up for long time, and Crito, looking at him, marveled at how a person can peacefully sleep on the eve of the capital punishment. When Socrates opened his eyes, he was very surprised to see Crito. - It must be late already, - he said, - why didn't you wake me up, Crito? - No, it is still very early, - answered Crito, - the sun had not risen yet. I admired your calm sleep and rejoiced over you, that in a dream you are able to forget of the upcoming misfortune, of the death waiting for you. I was always amazed at your serenity, but did not expect that the tranquility will not leave you in these terrible days. Socrates smiled and said: - Little did you know your teacher. But tell me, why did you come so early today? Not to watch me sleep? - No. I have a big request to you, not only mine, but of many people dedicated to you, - timidly began Crito. - Tell quickly! - Socrates said with passion. - We have decided to save you from death, Socrates. There is a way: at night we can sneak you out of the prison. The face of Socrates got

gloomy, he looked at Crito strictly and with sadness. - Hear me out, teacher, - Crito said. - You're been convicted unjustly. Remember how much good you can still do to people. Take pity of your little children, take pity of us, agree to escape from the prison. We have arranged all this. The guard can be bribed, we can move you out in disguise to a neighboring land. There are people I know, they will gladly take you. We will ship your children there, too. They will grow with you, and won't be orphans. We have enough money. I will give you all that I have. You know I'm rich, and beside me, the others, your disciples, prepared money to save you, because you're more precious to us all. I beg you, agree to run. There's no time to think: only tonight it's possible to do this. After all, this is the last night before your execution. - Crito spoke heartily, with tears, but, judging by the face of Socrates, he saw that the teacher was not persuaded by his words. When the Crito finished talking, Socrates said: - Thank you, Crito. I know that you ventured all this out of good feelings for me. I know that you all love me and are thankful to me. But we shouldn't be guided only by feelings. To save myself, I'll have to use deception, break my word. In the court, I said that I'll obey the verdict, that I am ready to suffer for my teaching, and no torment shall compel me to abandon it. Suppose you get me out of prison alive; alive - but already not that person I entered it, you'll get a crook out of here. Is that what you want? - Crito felt that Socrates was right, but could not yet abandon the thoughts to save him. - Those who knows you will not believe that you are a deceiver; you can fool only those bad people who unjustly condemned you, - said Crito. - Others will only rejoice over saving your life. - No, Crito, - Socrates replied firmly. - I'll deceive not only my enemies but also all the people and will betray my conscience. I spent my life teaching that a person should never act unfairly; if, however, I will do so myself, who then will believe into what I taught? I would leave the prison, the enemies, but where would I go from the voice of my conscience? Let's leave this unrealistic intent, my friend Crito, we'll together bravely embrace the inevitable. Crito realized that they can't save their teacher, and went back with sadness to tell other students about Socrates's answer.

Part XII. The last lecture of Socrates

The day of execution came. Customary, they performed executions before sunset. Disciples of Socrates gathered from the morning by prison doors. Many of them wept bitterly. The prison guard came out and told to the visitors: - Now they'll take the shackles off Socrates, and then I'll let you in. Sometime later they opened prison doors. Students found Socrates on bed, he was just unshackled. His wife stood beside the bed and held their youngest child in her hands. Having seen the students of her husband, she, sobbing, said: - This is the last time they come to you, Socrates, they'll be listening to you for the last time. This is the last time you're having a conversation with them. - Wife was hurting herself, teared her hair. Socrates asked students to take her home.

He wanted to get up, but his legs became swollen and ached badly from heavy shackles. He rubbed them and he felt better. - Notice, friends, - he said to his disciples, - there's a consolation to any suffering. How long ago did this leg suffer from the heavy shackles; yet now it's well, and relieved? The same happens with any suffering. Now I can stand up. Students surrounded Socrates, they wanted to talk and listen to him, but it was difficult to utter a word because of tears, and they could only think about the terrible mortal hour of Socrates, bitter separation, and did not dare to speak. The teacher realized what they had in their hearts. - I see, I know, that you feel sorry for me and not only pity but also scared for me. How do I comfort you and encourage? Look at me. I am calm, no regrets or fear of anything. I feel easy and light in my soul. I end my life in prison, sentenced to death. People think it's a shame, but how can you consider it a shame when I suffer for truth, and not for a wrong shameful act? People slandered me, condemned me, but I can't be angry at them, or hate them. I know that they acted so of sheer folly. I reproached them, pointed out to their errors for their own good, but they did not understand me and considered it evil from my side. They acted as foolish children. I'll explain this by example.

Let's assume that a man was assigned to sick children, who satisfied all their desires, but then another, a healer, came and began to care only about how to

cure them. Who would, you think, the sick children wish to keep with themselves? Of course, who do not challenge them, and they'd try to get rid of the doctor. They would say: this man torments us, locks, doesn't give us to drink and eat in abundance, fills with a bitter medicine, cuts, burns. Let's drive him away or, even better, so that he couldn't come back to us. My opponents did not understand me, just like the kids their doctor. - Having said this, Socrates had stopped, noticing that Crito wanted to tell him something. - Socrates, - Crito said, you know that every your word is dear to us, but we kindly ask you to stop talking. The warden just told us that if anyone in his last hours speaks a lot and fervently, the poison will act slower and more of it will be required to drink. - Thank the warden for the tip, my friends, - Socrates answered, and ask him to prepare more poison for me. I'm ready to drink it not once, but two or three times, if necessary. Poison will make its effect when it's time, until then let's talk peacefully. I have a lot I want to talk to you about. Sit closer to me. Socrates sat on the bed, and the disciples sat around him, however anyone could. His student Phaedo was sitting closest to Socrates. He had beautiful long hair, and Socrates, during their discussions, liked to strike his hair and run his fingers through it. And this time, too, Phaedo was sitting on a low bench near the bed, and the hand of Socrates was lying on his head. - What, Phaedo, - the teacher said, - where will tomorrow be your beautiful hair? - The Greeks had the custom of cutting hair out of sorrow and putting it on the grave of whom they were grieving for. This was what Socrates hinted at. These words of their teacher vividly reminded to his students about their upcoming grief; some of them cried. Socrates said: - Friends, I am not afraid of death - scared not to die, but to live meaningless, sinful life.

Part XIII. The death of Socrates

Socrates went silent. His disciples waited for him to talk more. The teacher said: - However, the time goes by. It's no longer early. I'll go wash myself so to not to bother others with washing my dead body. And you wait for me here, stay with me till the end. Socrates went to another room to wash, and Crito went with him. And the other disciples, waiting for him, talked about their last conversation with the teacher, about his death, how they will live abandoned, without his beloved mentor. The evening came. In the room, where the disciples were, a guard admitted his relatives, Socrates' wife and children: one elder and two youngsters. Soon after, Socrates entered himself. He started saying goodbye to them. Women raised such a lament that Socrates had to ask to walk them away. Then the disciples said to Socrates: - Tell us your last will. Maybe you want to arrange something for your children? We will gladly do for you everything that you will order. Socrates said: - I have no property, so there's nothing to handle. Act as I taught you: that's all my will. Then you will know what to do for my children, also. - And how will you order to bury you, Socrates? - Crito asked. - Why do you ask me about that? - Socrates asked him reproachfully. - Didn't you see that whole my life I took care of my body only to let it serve the soul, and when my soul leaves the body, doesn't it matter what they'll do with it? - Socrates laid down on the bed, going to start a conversation with the disciples, as the door has opened and the warden came in; he used to come to the prison with commands from the judges. - Socrates, - he said, - when I came to other convicts to announce to them the time of their execution - to drink a poison, they greeted me with foul language and curses. That's not what I expect from you, because there was never before in the prison any kinder and more just person than you. Do not get angry at me, but on the others, the culprits of your death. You know what news I brought to you. Goodbye, try courageously to undergo what we have no power to cancel. - He said that and walked away from the Socrates' bed, because he couldn't hold his tears. - Goodbye to you, too, - answered Socrates to the leaving warden, - I will complete everything as it should be. - And then he said to his disciples: - What a good man! He often came here to talk to me. How sincerely he feels

sorry for me! And now, friends! Tell them to bring the poison. - Why rush, teacher? - One of the disciples began persuading him. The sun had not yet left behind the mountains. Other convicts manage even after the sunset to eat, drink, and spend time with loved ones. Time tolerates! - Let others do so; to them, it must be dear to prolong life even for a little longer. And my life is finished, and there's no point to delay its end, - Socrates replied. - Fulfil what I said. One student made a sign to the standing guard there, and he went for the poison. After him a jailer entered with a bowl in which poison was diluted. - Thank you, my friend, - Socrates told him. - Teach me, what to do now. - After you drink the poison, you should walk until you feel the heaviness in your legs, - replied the jailer. Then lie down on the bed, because that'll be a sign that the poison starts to work. Without change on his face, Socrates took the bowl with the poison from the jailer and drank it to the bottom. His students held themselves strong the whole day, but now couldn't hold any longer and burst in tears. Only Socrates did not lose his firmness. - What do you do, friends? - He counseled them. - I sent women and children away to avoid seeing their faintheartedness, and you act not better than them. That's how you're you listening to me! - After drinking the poison, Socrates did not stop walking around the room, as the jailer told. But then he felt that his legs became heavy, and he laid on his back. Students surrounded his bed. The jailer approached and strongly pushed his fingers on the leg. - Do you feel pain? - He asked. - No, - answered Socrates. The jailer suppressed the leg above and Socrates already didn't feel anything. - That's because his body begins to chill and stiffens. When the chill reaches his heart, that'll be the end, - the jailer said to the disciples. - Friends, I'm dying, render thanks to God! - Socrates said. All disciples rushed to their teacher, leaned to him, started to call him, but he didn't answered to them. He laid motionless; then his body convulsed, and mouth and eyes stopped. What laid before the disciples was already lifeless body of their beloved teacher. One of them bent down and closed his eyes.

That's how Socrates lived and died, but his teaching didn't die. The best of his disciples continued his blessed work, taught kindness and truth, and wrote down the instructions of their great teacher. Thanks to their manuscripts, we also learned about him. Socrates lived four hundred years before the time when Jesus Christ came to Earth.

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